



Funding Opportunity Announcement Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce Training Fiscal Year 2023 Grant Program

Program Description: The Maryland Energy Administration (“MEA”) offers the Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce Training Program (“Program”) for Fiscal Year 2023, which is funded through the Maryland Offshore Wind Business Development Fund, established by Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t, § 9-20C-03. The Program is a competitive grant program that assists new or existing workforce training centers enter into the State’s offshore wind supply chain and workforce. Proposed projects must provide training and education for employment within the offshore wind industry in Maryland and the larger U.S. offshore wind market and related industries, including but not limited to technical trade skills and/or safety standards.

MEA will consider applications for new or existing workforce training centers owned and/or operated by emerging businesses, including minority-owned emerging businesses, nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, and academic institutions that are expanding their course offerings for the offshore wind industry. Applicants that received grant funding from this Program in a previous fiscal year may receive additional grant funding from the FY 2023 Program.

Type of Grant Program: Competitive

Application Deadline: December 1, 2022, 5:00 PM EST

Program Budget

A total of \$800,000 for Fiscal Year 2023 is anticipated to be available. The actual amount available may vary, depending on the quantity of applications received and the Maryland Energy Administration’s available resources within a given fiscal year.

Eligible Applicants

The Program is open to the following organizations:

- Emerging Businesses,
- Non-profit organizations;
- State, local, and municipal governments and their agencies/institutions; and
- Institutions of Higher Education, including public or private universities, community colleges, and trade schools.

Emerging Businesses

For purposes of this program, an “Emerging Business” means “a business that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by an individual or individuals who are certified to have a personal net worth, as defined in §14-301 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, that does not exceed \$6,500,000 as adjusted each year for inflation according to the Consumer Price Index.” (Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t § 9-20C-01(e)).

All business applicants are required to submit an attestation that they are an Emerging Business. If selected for an award, applicants must provide a notarized Personal Net Worth (PNW) Statement Form for each business owner(s) within 30 days of receiving an award letter.

Business Applicants that do not submit this documentation or do not meet the Emerging Business definition are not eligible to receive grant funding from this program.

Nonprofits, Governmental Entities, and Academic Institutions:

Applicants that are a non-profit, government entity, academic institution, or labor union must demonstrate that the proposed project and grant funding will be used for the benefit of Emerging Businesses, including minority-owned Emerging Businesses in the State of Maryland.

Minority Participation

MEA strongly encourages Emerging Businesses representing and working to empower Maryland’s underserved communities (including minorities, women, and people with disabilities) and veterans of the United States Armed Forces to apply to the Program.

Eligible Activities: Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce Training grant funds are provided to awardees to offset the costs of establishing and/or operating an offshore wind specific workforce education and training center. Proposed projects should directly support the delivery of offshore wind related education and training in Maryland, but should also be designed to serve the larger U.S. offshore wind market and related industries.

Grant funds **may** be used to offset the following:

Capital Expenditures

1. Training center expansion, including relocation costs, new construction of real property, and renovations to existing real property; and
2. Purchase and installation of new or manufacturer-refurbished training-related equipment at a new or existing real property.

Operating Expenditures

1. Curriculum development and/or training center certification or licensing of a technical trade skills and safety skills provider for the offshore wind industry;

and/or,

2. Operational costs of the provider of the technical trade skills and safety skills training courses for the offshore wind industry; including, but not limited to, training center overhead, instructor salaries and benefits, and training supplies & materials, including personal protection equipment (PPE) for both the training course and Covid-19.

Training Centers must incorporate the following into their proposed projects.

- Training centers must develop curriculum and provide education, technical, and/or safety training specific to knowledge and skills used within the offshore wind industry.
- Training centers must provide all education, including but not limited to, technical and/or safety training at **no cost** to all participating students.
- Training centers must have all participating students complete, at a minimum, the United States Department of Labor's (DOL) Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) 10-Hour safety course for general construction.

Review Process

Acknowledging Receipt of your Application

All applications are reviewed for completeness. If your application is determined to be incomplete, you will be notified in writing within 30 days. If your application is determined to be ineligible, your application will be returned with an explanation.

Application Evaluations

A review team composed of individuals from MEA, other state agencies or other institutions will review the applications. Applications will be evaluated on a **competitive basis**. MEA at its discretion may contact applicants with questions and requests for additional information about the project proposals during the application review period.

Application Selection

The review team will rank all qualifying applications by general eligibility and final score. Applications are selected based on rank and funding availability. MEA reserves the right to not award Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce Training grant funding if applications are incomplete or earn low scores. All applicants will be notified of their selection status by email.

Possible Application Outcomes

There are four possible outcomes following the submission of an application under the

Program. MEA reserves the right to make no award if all applications are ineligible, incomplete, and/or do not meet the established program objectives and priorities. MEA may determine that the application is:

- Eligible, and selected for funding
- Eligible, but not selected for funding based on score and/or budget availability.
- Ineligible
- Incomplete

Award Notices

MEA will notify applicants selected for funding by an award letter followed by a grant agreement. The grant agreement will contain the terms and conditions for the grant, reporting requirements, and reimbursement information.

Timeline

The Program application and evaluation process will follow the timeline outlined below. This timeline is provided for program planning purposes, MEA will attempt to meet this timeline however, delays may occur, and grant award decisions may be delayed accordingly.

- **September 6, 2022:** Fiscal Year 2023 program announced
- **December 1, 2022:** The deadline to submit applications, **5:00 EST.**
- **December 2022:** Application review period
- **January 2023:** Grant award announcements
- **March 2023:** Grant agreements signed (projects begin)

Evaluation Criteria

In accordance with the information in this funding announcement, applications and supporting information will be used to determine applicants' eligibility and priority for available Program funds. Points are given for well-documented factors in the application package, and these factors must meet the objectives outlined in Section 6. Applications will be **graded and given a score out of 100** based on how well they met the required criteria. Applications **must receive a score of 70 or higher** to receive an award.

Applications will be evaluated according to the quality and thoroughness of the applicant's response to the following criteria as articulated in the application requirements:

1. **Alignment with the Program's Goal / Project Scope—15 points**
 - a. The applicant clearly connects the project's design and characteristics with the goal of establishing a Maryland OSW workforce.

- b. The project is scalable and the scaling benefits the establishment of an OSW workforce.
- c. The project is beneficial, relative to other applications to the OSW industry in the Mid-Atlantic region and/or the greater U.S..

2. Justification—15 points

- a. The proposed project justifies the needed capital or operating investment.
- b. The applicant has conducted and presented a needs analysis detailing the workforce gap that can be filled by the proposed investment.
- c. The applicant clearly articulates how success will be monitored, including any key metrics.

3. Feasibility—15 points

- a. The proposed project is feasible.
- b. The applicant demonstrates historic success with similar programming, including but not limited to, past performance with MEA funds.
- c. The applicant outlines the challenges the proposed program will face and how the challenges will be overcome, including how the proposed investment will help overcome those challenges.

4. Sustainability—10 points

- a. The applicant outlines the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the project.
- b. The project will maintain its ability to operate once grant funding is expended.

5. Economic Development Opportunity—20 points

a. Projected Employment—10 points

- 1. The applicant has a realistic estimate of how many jobs the project will create.
- 2. The applicant has an outreach and marketing plan to engage members of historically marginalized groups for job opportunities.

b. Program Participant Earnings Potential—10 points

- 1. The applicant has a reasonable estimate up to industry standards for wages of jobs created as a result of the project.

6. Budget and Return on Investment—15 points

- a. The project budget is reasonable for the proposed activity and the funding is appropriate in scale relative to the desired outcomes.
- b. The applicant has secured funding for their portion of the cost share to complete the project.
- c. The applicant has provided a discussion of the proposed project's return on investment that justifies the benefits of the project outweighing the costs.

7. Timeline—5 points

- a. The proposed project's timeline is realistic and attainable.
- b. The applicant has discussed potential challenges and mitigation strategies if they are unable to meet their timeline goal.

8. Support—5 points

- a. The proposed project has support in the form of letters of support, from relevant entities that can contribute to the success of the project.

Award Amount & Formula

MEA calculates grant awards as 75 percent of the total project costs. Grant awards may not exceed \$400,000 per applicant. Applicants must contribute at least 25 percent of the total project costs as matching funds or in-kind services. Matching funds may include, but are not limited to, a finance/loan agreement, cash on hand, a business line of credit, and/or other grant awards (state, federal, or private). In-kind services may include, but are not limited to, labor costs to administer the grant and use of a facility.

Partial Awards

Partial awards are possible under the Program. Full grant awards are made among approved projects from highest to lowest rank. If insufficient funds are available to fully fund a project, the applicant will be given the opportunity to fulfill the grant obligations with the remaining budgeted funding. If the applicant agrees, then the project will be funded with the remaining funds. If the applicant does not agree, then the offer is made to the next approved project in rank order until all funding has been expended or all remaining projects have rejected the offer.

Required Application Documents

Applicants must complete a Maryland Offshore Wind Workforce Training Program Application Package consistent with the following forms via the online application portal JotForm.

The application package must include the following components:

1. **Project Narrative:** The Project Narrative should provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed project and workforce development opportunities. The Project Narrative should be no more than 10 pages long and should include the following:
 - I. **Applicant Overview**
 - a. The Applicant Overview should discuss the Applicant's business operations, their interest and plan for getting involved in the offshore wind industry.
 - II. **Project Location and Facility**
 - a. Applicants should provide details about the project location(s) and facility(s). Include a sitemap from Google Earth or another mapping service indicating location(s) of the proposed project.
 - III. **Historic Success**
 - a. Applicants should include a summary of historic success running their program, or a similar vocational program within their organization, including the number of graduates who have been placed in jobs and their wages in those jobs. If applicable, applicants should include information related to any previous MEA grants.
 - IV. **Needs Assessment/Justification**
 - a. Applicants should provide a high level Needs Assessment discussing the problem the proposed project aims to impact. The Needs Assessment should provide justification for grant funding for the project. It should address the following questions:
 - b. What is the problem/issue that the proposed project intends to impact?
 - c. How does the proposed project aim to address the identified problem/issue?
 - d. What is the anticipated impact of the proposed project on the identified problem/issue?
 - V. **Sustainability Statement**
 - a. Applicants should include discussion of their sustainability commitments and how they intend to incorporate social, environmental, and economic sustainability into their proposed project.
 - VI. **Economic Development Opportunities:** Applicants should have discussion of the following to demonstrate their proposed project's economic development opportunities:
 - a. **Projected employment**
 1. Applicants should provide an estimate of the number of jobs expected to be created as a result of this project with justification for the estimations.
 2. Applicants should include both full-time and part-time workers, specifying the type of employment for each job created.

b. Program participant/graduate earnings potential

1. Applicants should provide the total estimated income and wages graduates will receive as new employees after completing the program.

2. Project Work Plan: The Project Work Plan should consist of the following:

IV. Project Scope Statement,

- a. Applicants should provide a project scope statement that provides the project purpose, goals and objectives, and strategies for achieving those goals and objectives.
- b. The project scope should align with the Program's goals of supporting Maryland's offshore wind workforce.
- c. Applicants should include discussion of their sustainability commitments and how they intend to proceed with a project that is mindful of economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

V. Detailed Project Timeline

- a. Applicants should include a realistic and feasible timeline of all project milestones and anticipated end date.
- b. Applicants should include a discussion of potential timeline challenges or constraints and mitigation strategies.

VI. List of Project Partners and Training Instructors

- a. Applicants should provide a list of project partners and training instructors who are expected to work on this project along with their defined roles and responsibilities.

VII. Marketing and Outreach Plan

- a. Applicants should provide a drafted marketing plan for how the applicant intends to market the training program, with special reference to how they intend to market towards members of historically marginalized communities, formerly incarcerated individuals, and people with disabilities.

VIII. Course Curriculum

- a. Applicants should provide samples of the course curricula, syllabi, and modules for the training courses provided by the project.

IX. Graduate Placement Plan

- a. Applicants should provide a drafted placement plan for how the applicant intends to connect graduates with employment.

X. Challenges

- a. Applicants should discuss potential constraints or challenges related to time, budget, and resources that may impact project success. Applicants should provide mitigation strategies for each identified challenge.
2. **Budget Narrative:** The Project Narrative should include details on total anticipated project costs, cost-share, and how the applicant intends to use grant funds. It should include a minimum of the following:
- IV. **Total Project Budget:**
 - a. The total project budget should be a breakdown of intended use of grant funds, including, but not limited to, relocation costs, renovations, equipment, installation, labor and personnel, permitting and inspections, and administrative expenses.
 - b. Applicants should demonstrate the project budget is reasonable and feasible for the proposed activities.
 - c. Applicants should include discussion of the project's return on investment and how the proposed project's benefits justify the costs.
 - V. **Leveraged Funds:**
 - a. Applicants should provide a list of leverage funds, including, but not limited to, finance/loan agreement, cash on hand, a business line of credit, or other grant award.
 - VI. **All In-Kind Services**
 - a. Applicants should provide a comprehensive list of all in-kind services including but not limited to, labor costs to administer the grant.
 - VII. **A Proof of Funds Letter**
 - a. Applicants **must** provide a proof of funds letter from a financial institution or lender indicating they will be able to provide their required cost share of the total project costs to completion.
 - VIII. **Certificate of Status:**
 - a. All applicants must provide a certificate of status from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) showing the applicant is in good standing with the State of Maryland. Certificates of status can be ordered from SDAT online.
 - IX. **Business Ownership Documents:**
 - a. Business applicants **must** provide documents that demonstrate which individual(s) owns and controls at least 51% of the business. These documents may include, but are not limited to, Articles of Incorporation, Corporate Charters, or Shareholder Reports.
 - X. **Personal Net Worth (PNW) Attestation:**

- a. Business applicants **must** provide an attestation that they are an emerging business, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 9-20C-01(e).

XI. **IRS Form W-9:**

- a. All Applicants **must** provide a U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W-9 for the Applicant Organization. The Applicant Organization name and address provided on the IRS Form W-9 must match the Applicant Organization name and address provided in the Application Form submitted through the online application portal. An IRS Form W-9 can be requested from the IRS.

XII. **Specification Sheets:**

- a. *If applicable*, Applicants must provide product manuals or specification sheets for all equipment included in the proposed project.

XIII. **Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) Certifications:**

- a. *If applicable*, Applicants must provide equipment certifications provided by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) participating in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) NRTL Program for all equipment included in the proposed project. A list of current OSHA NRTLs can be found on OSHA's website.

XIV. **Letters of Support:**

- a. Applicants must provide a letter of support from each project partner which details the project, as well as in kind or financial commitment(s) made by the project partner. Unsigned letters of support will not be accepted.
- b. Applicants should also include letter(s) of commitment from local businesses in the offshore wind or related supply chains pledging to hire trainee graduates. Applicants may include additional letters of support from local businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, or government agencies. **Three or more letters of support is preferred.**

Submission

The Program uses an online application submission portal, JotForm, that all applicants are required to use when submitting grant applications. The online application submission portal is accessible through MEA's website and [here](#). MEA will not consider incomplete applications.

Program Requirements

Personal Net Worth Statement Form

If selected for an award, MEA will contact Applicants for a notarized Personal Net Worth Statement Form which will be obtained securely through virtru, virtru is a secured email process that will be initiated by the Program Manager. As a condition of grant funding, Applicants must provide proof they are an Emerging Business, as defined in Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 9-20C-01(e). Personal Net Worth Statements must be notarized and provided to MEA within 30 days of receiving an award letter. The PNW Statement Form is available on MEA's website in the section titled "Program Documents."

Reporting

Pursuant to the grant agreement, performance reporting, including quarterly reports, outreach and marketing materials, the graduate placement plan, and course curriculum materials are to be completed and submitted in accordance with the timelines described in the grant agreement.

Reimbursement

Pursuant to the grant agreement, grant funds may be paid in arrears over the course of the grant period for the performance of eligible, approved activities. The grant agreement will also include reporting requirements, which if not met, may result in a delay in reimbursement, disallowance of expense, or suspension of the grant.

Confidential and Personal Information

1. In accordance with Section 4-501(c)(3) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, MEA is required to advise Applicants of the following:
 - I. Any personal information requested in the Application is necessary to evaluate the eligibility of the Applicant for a Grant.
 - II. Failure to provide all required information will prevent MEA from processing the Application.
 - III. Some of this information may be provided to other agencies of the State to process the payment of Grant Funds if the Applicant is awarded a Grant.
 - IV. The Applicant's name, project information, and Grant award may be publicly accessible on our website if the Applicant is awarded a Grant.
 - V. As set forth in Section 4-502 of the General Provisions Article, an applicant has the right to inspect, amend, or correct a personal record as maintained by the Program.
2. All information submitted in a Grant Application is subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA). If the Applicant believes information in the Application is

confidential and therefore should be exempt from disclosure under the PIA, the Applicant shall clearly mark this information and identify it by page and section or line number.

Grant Program General Provisions:

MEA grant programs are covered by general provisions that apply to all energy programs, the most current version of these General Provisions is [v.3, February 2022](#). The latest approved version of this document will be incorporated into all FY23 grant agreements issued by MEA.

In addition to the general provisions, MEA may at its sole discretion obligate some, all, or none of the FY23 Program budget, based on the quality and eligibility of applications submitted to MEA.

Program- Specific Requirements:

In addition to the general provisions, the following funding qualification applies to this program:

1. Applicants that are an Emerging Business or a Non-Profit must demonstrate they are registered and in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) by submitting a Certificate of Status. Certificates of Status may be ordered online from SDAT.
2. To receive grant funding for a project, the successful applicant must enter into a Grant Agreement with MEA by May 30, 2023, unless an extension is given in writing (email) by MEA.
3. A grant award will not be made for any work completed before the effective date of the Grant Agreement with MEA.
4. If applicable, Grantees shall ensure all equipment meets certain safety criteria including:
 - a. Be certified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) participating in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) NRTL Program;
 - b. Be in compliance with all applicable building, electric, and fire codes.

Program Changes:

Any update (e.g, extension of a deadline) or clarification about the Program and any corrections to inadvertent errors in the Program information will be available on the Program webpage. In addition, MEA will communicate clarifications and updates made after the application deadline directly to applicants or grantees, as applicable, by letter and/or e-mail. The final grant amount for each Grantee will be made after review of all proposals received and is subject to funding availability for the Program and any relevant statutory requirement applicable at that time

Questions Can be Directed to:

Interested applicants may submit questions, comments, concerns, and suggestions to the following MEA Program Manager:

Emma Stoney,
Energy Program Manager
Maryland Energy Administration
wind.mea@maryland.gov
410-537-4000